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ing. To draw a comparison that may seem at first sight remote, Cardinal Mercier in the benignity of his character, in that practical wisdom that protects one from the deceits of the worldly, and most of all in a superior power of discerning and stating fundamental issue, reminds one of our own Abraham Lincoln.

The story of Belgium, in which the Cardinal is the dominant figure, is as fascinating, in one aspect, as *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Mr. Worldly Wiseman, for instance, and Mr. Legality are there; and so is Apollyon. The Cardinal's book, too, like Bunyan's classic, is almost as good a story for the young as it is for the old. Fortunate the child or youth who in learning something about the tragic events of these latter years, catches an admiration for really great character.

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD. By Philip Gibbs. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Sir Philip Gibbs—who was one of the men sent without military passports to report events in France soon after the outbreak of the war, and who was afterwards an officially recognized war correspondent—has written a book which, however unpleasant it may be, is to all appearances both truthful and sincere. Its truthfulness is its greatest virtue; for what we call sincerity is often nothing more than a kind of incontinence of feeling; but a really truth-telling book is a thing of great value. In this case, the author pictures the harrowing realities of war in their painful reality, without sensationalism and without even a touch of the vain pride of the realist in producing a great effect by means of a plain tale. He uses neither the camouflage of humor nor the veil of an impersonal or technical style to hide the pitifulness of the facts; he does not divert attention from horror by praise of gallantry. He does not attempt to conceal the fact that he is a normally sensitive human being and that shocking things shock him.

There is food for thought, too, in what Sir Philip says about the after-effects of the brutal struggle. He is not the first to remind us that you cannot teach men to fight without teaching them to hate, and that hate is more easily roused than exorcised; but he has more than the usual array of facts with which to support his statements. True, one suspects him of being slightly hyperbolical when he says, concerning Great Britain, that "ruin, immense, engulfing, annihilating to our strength as a nation, and as an empire, stares us brutally in the face"; but when he points to the increase of crime—and crime of a particularly atrocious and disgusting nature—in England and elsewhere, he makes an impression.

This book of Sir Philip's, then, is in more ways than one worth while. If there are any jingoes left in the world—any persons who would desire to precipitate another great war, or to enter one for any reasons less cogent than those which brought the United States somewhat tardily to the side of the Allies on the battlefields of France—the reading of such a record as this ought to make them feel ashamed of themselves. If there are any persons so dull and unimaginative that they cannot figure to themselves what the harrowing of France and Belgium and the annihilation of the British expeditionary force meant

in terms of individual pain and sorrow and of nastiness and horror and pity and the abomination of desolation, they should be greatly enlightened by a perusal of this book. Sir Philip has written with considerable skill, and without offense, for eyes that ordinarily do not see anything beyond the printed page.

In several ways, however, the book is somewhat unsatisfactory. Its tone, one may say, is not that of well-balanced thinking or of altogether unbiassed criticism; it does not wholly convince. If the author had avoided the appearance of temperamental or professional bias in cases in which doubtless it does not exist, he might have made a stronger impression.

Against English officers in general, the author is somewhat bitter. The High Command wasted the lives of their men, and were very unappreciative of war correspondents. There is a kind of ludicrous incongruity between the two parts of the indictment. "I know an officer who was awarded the D. S. O. because he had hindered the work of war correspondents with the zeal of a hedge sparrow in search of worms." The language, on the part of one who elsewhere issues solemn warnings in an elevated style, strikes one as not being sufficiently measured. "What mainly was wrong with our generalship was the system which put the high command into the hands of a group of men belonging to the old school of war, unable by reason of their age and traditions, to get away from rigid methods and to become elastic in face of new conditions." Seen from the trenches the British generalship no doubt seemed exceedingly bad. There were mistakes; there was needless loss of life. But is it fair to take almost exclusively the point of view of the man in the trenches who knew little or nothing about the progress of the campaign or even of the particular battle in which he was concerned. It seems, one must say less just than humanitarian. It is probably perfectly natural that the officer who was the most considerate and intelligent in his dealings with war correspondents should have been also "the organizing brain of the Second Army." Both facts are probably beyond dispute; one can only say that if one were Sir John Harrington, one would rather that these two tributes had not been made in quite so close a conjunction. Thus a certain want of tact, a seeming want of moderation, diminishes somewhat the effect of Sir Philip's somewhat powerful book.

Furthermore, one cannot rid oneself of the feeling that Sir Philip leans somewhat toward the pacifist fallacy. His final statement, to be sure, is sound enough. "The devil in Germany had to be killed. There was no other way, except by helping the Germans to kill it before it mastered them. Now let us exorcise our own devils and get back to kindness toward all men of good will." Nor would the author's frank confession that in the early days of the war he at times desired "peace-at-almost-any-price, peace by negotiation, by compromise, that the river of blood might cease to flow" detract at all from the strength of his book, were it not that the tone of the whole seems somehow to instill, not only by fact, but by suggestion, a peace-at-any-price mood. War is as bad as bad can be, but a kind of temperamental inability to reconcile oneself to the idea of war for any cause, however clearly the mind realizes the justice of fighting in the particular instance, would seem to be unfortunate. At least, so long as there is

potential evil in this world, there must exist in sound human nature the power to do whatever is necessary to put down that evil without much flinching or crawling of the flesh. "Often," writes the author, "I was unfair, bitter, unbalanced, wrong." The confession is disarming, but not reassuring.

A war-sick world cannot be much helped by disquisitions on the horrors of war. There is little curative effect in a simple revulsion of feeling; often the revulsion seems simply to do little more than prepare for a resurgence of the original impulses. What we need is constructive suggestion rather than insistence upon the past and an effort to retain the lesson of that past in the form of outraged feeling. The real value of the book lies in this: that the facts will prove instructive to another generation.